

Musical Fidelity V-DAC II

The knock against digital sound, from its inception, has always been that it seems “edgy,” at least compared to analog sources such as vinyl and its often accompanying and beloved tube amplifiers. Because of the ubiquity of this view, it seems that it must be in some ways true. Whether “CD sound” is in fact “edgy” is an interesting question. Perhaps its ‘edginess’ is more authentic, that is to say, more life like, or more true to actual sound than we would like to think. However, an added dimension to this question is the fact that not all digital sound is *equally* edgy. Cheap conversion from digital to analog in fact sounds edgier than expensive conversion from digital to analog. Cheap CD players don’t sound as good as expensive ones. And the main difference, at least in my opinion, lies in the conversion circuits of the so-called “DAC” (digital to analog converter) that converts the music from a series of numbers to an electrical analog signal, which is then amplified and fed to a speaker and turned into sound waves. The DAC is often the weakest link in any digital music system.

All this is an introduction to my revelatory experience of having recently bought a Musical Fidelity V-DAC II stand-alone digital-to-analog converter designed to make the music on your computer’s hard disk sound as good as it can possibly sound. You will be amazed how good indeed this is: music that was harsh, edgy, and barely tolerable is transformed into something much closer to what we hear when we hear real music. CD’s, whether transferred to a hard disk or played on a dedicated player used as a transport, sound incredibly better when they are treated to proper conversion. They are cleaner, smoother, sweeter, with greater articulation and detail than one could think possible. The music shines and breathes. The dynamic range appears increased. The sound stage is magnificent. EVERYBODY interested in the quality of sound should get a proper DAC! And the Musical Fidelity unit is much more than a “proper DAC.” And it won’t break the bank. And you’d actually be *stupid* not to get one....

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